



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

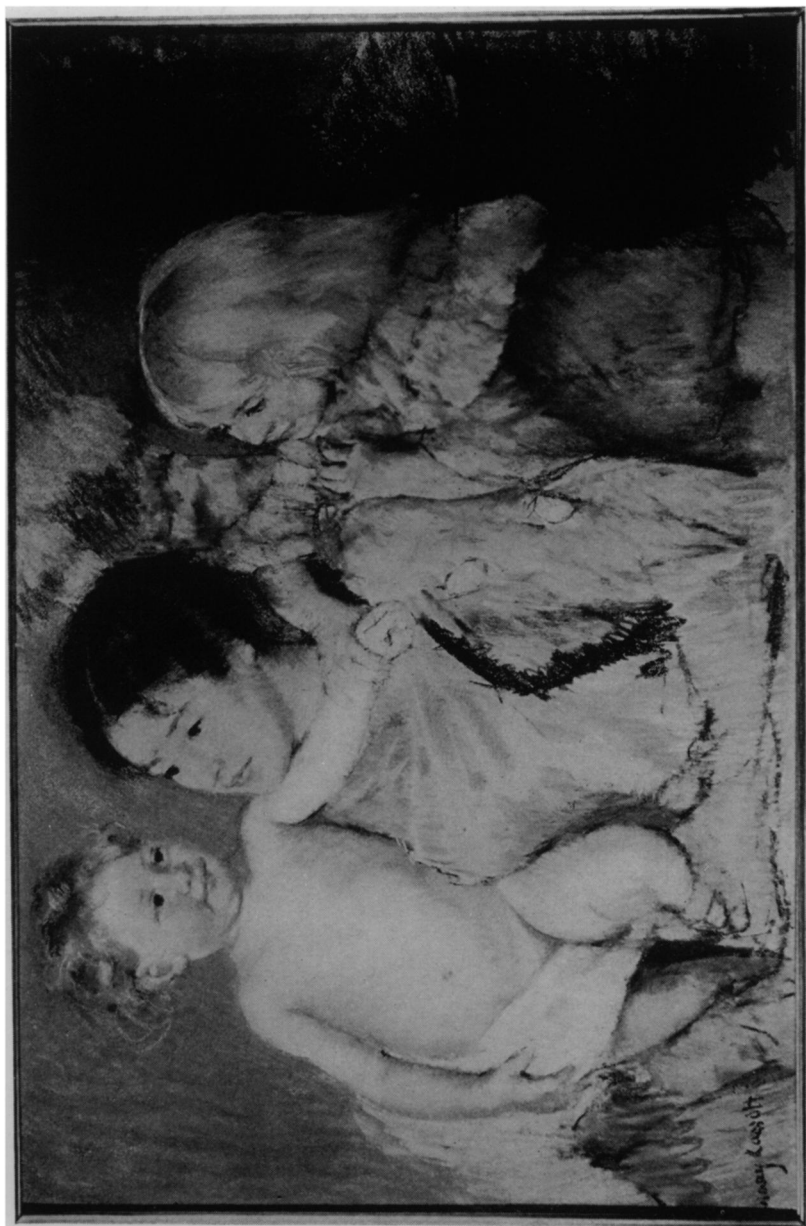
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



LA SORTIE DU BAIN

By Mary Cassatt

Gift of J. H. Wade

THE BULLETIN OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

SEVENTH YEAR

DECEMBER 1920

NUMBER 10

LA SORTIE DU BAIN BY MARY CASSATT

Mary Cassatt is par excellence the painter of motherhood. There is perhaps no artist who has sensed so beautifully the feeling of the mother for the child, the spirit of intimate companionship and elemental understanding. A painter of lesser skill might have let such a subject become sentimental, but there is no sentimentality in her brushwork. Instead, there is only the strong and virile sense of a very human relationship.

Her subjects are never formalized. They may be simply the figures of mother and child, or they may be any of the many charming and intimate incidents of the daily round of duties, as in the beautiful pastel, *La Sortie du Bain*, which J. H. Wade has just presented to the Museum. The bath has been finished, and the child stands upon the mother's knee, partially draped with a towel. He leans against her, and the arm, which he has thrown across her for support, is grasped by an older child, who looks on interestedly. It makes a beautiful group—unified in composition and in sentiment.

The color is characteristic. Against a background of green, the flesh tints of the child's body and the grey-white of the towel tell effectively. The mother's robe is grey, edged with black, and her black hair contrasts with the baby's golden curls and the flaxen hair of the older child, who is clothed in an orange dress, trimmed with white. The flesh tones are beautifully handled and the whole composition has that effect of softness and delicacy, which is characteristic of pastel technique.

It is an interesting thing that Mary Cassatt should have concentrated almost entirely on representation of this kind. Her master, Degas, had painted his pictures of ballet dancers and race courses. On them he had expended his unrivaled skill as a draughtsman, and through them he has won his fame. Mary Cassatt, his pupil, in turn specialized and found her strength lay in representations of childhood and motherhood. In this she has made her important contribution to the cause of modern art. In her chosen field few artists have even approached her.

Mary Cassatt found her artistic milieu in France. Yet in a way she connects modern French art with the United States. The claims of nationality bind her to us although her art binds her to France. But further than this it was through her keen insight that many of the finest works of Manet, Degas and the Impressionists found their way into American collections. When they were laughed at and ridiculed in Paris, she saw their worth and through her advice H. O. Havermeyer and others of her friends, bought the despised pictures and added them to their collections. Time has proved the lasting value of her judgment.

She is an American, born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She studied first at the Philadelphia Academy, but finding too little scope for her imagination she traveled through Europe, searching knowledge in the artistic heritage of Spain, Italy and Holland. Later, coming to France, she found herself in sympathy with Manet and the Impressionists, who were struggling against the power of public disfavor. She came to know Manet, Renoir, Pissarro and Degas. But it was the work of the latter that especially attracted her. Degas became her master, and for more than fifteen years she studied with him. This fact and her friendship for the Impressionists explain very largely her artistic evolution.

When Manet painted, hostility to his system of color blinded the eyes of the public to the qualities of line that marked his work. They could see nothing in his art which bound him to the past. Now time has passed and a clearer perspective enables us to see that on one hand his revolutionary color influenced the men who have come to be called Impressionists, and was the starting point for their development; on the other hand, his sense of line and rhythm placed him in the age-long tradition of French art. He was the descendant of Ingres and passed on the torch to Degas to Matisse and Gauguin.

Degas and his pupil, Mary Cassatt, followed more particularly this second element in Manet's art. They can at no time be classed as pure Impressionists, although thoroughly in sympathy with the Impressionists' ideals. Line rather than color was their primary object. The Impressionists, truly so-called, worked instead towards light and the effects of light and color. Line was not their preoccupation. But no vital art that

came in touch with the evolution of the Impressionists could fail to be profoundly affected. Degas and Cassatt were influenced in their system of technique. The old fashioned chiaroscuro was a thing of the past; strong colors were laid on the canvas side by side in the approved new technique.

As the years have gone by Mary Cassatt has developed her art along these lines. Many of her most beautiful paintings are in pastel, like this recent gift, *La Sortie du Bain*. In this she only follows many French artists who from the time of La Tour and Perroneau have loved the unique beauty of this medium. The study of *Ballet Girls* by Degas, presented by Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Wade in 1916, is in pastel as well. So the work of master and pupil are worthily represented in the Museum collection by examples of this technique.

At Paris and at her beautiful Chateau in the Department of the Oise, Mary Cassatt has experimented in many mediums besides pastel—oil, etching and color prints. In the latter field she has been one of the initiators in the revival of this art during the last decades. A small group of these color prints will be shown in Gallery XI for the next few weeks in connection with this important new gift of J. H. Wade, which will be exhibited for the first time in the Special Exhibition Cabinet. They will give an interesting opportunity to study the breadth and variety of Mary Cassatt's work. Her sense of draughtsmanship is nowhere better shown than in these beautiful impressions from her etched plates. These prints will be supplemented by a crayon drawing by Degas and by etchings and lithographs of modern French artists.

W. M. M.

THANKSGIVING

A recent trip to Cincinnati, Memphis, Kansas City and Chicago has brought the Director back to our Museum with many thoughts for reflection and with a renewed sense of pride in the Cleveland Museum because it is so well equipped to carry on the vital and varied work of a modern art museum.

But this renewed feeling of pride goes back in still greater measure beyond the building to John Huntington and Horace Kelley, who thirty years ago had the vision to realize what a museum would mean for the physical, educational and spiritual growth of the city, and who made provisions which have made possible all this useful service to the community.